

### *Peyerimhoffina gracilis* (Schneider) (Neur.: Chrysopidae) in Hampshire and Surrey

*Peyerimhoffina gracilis* is a green lacewing with a circum-Mediterranean and eastern European distribution, but was reported as well established at Silwood Park, near Ascot, Berkshire from collections made 1999-2001 (Donato *et al.*, 2001. *Peyerimhoffina gracilis* (Schneider, 1851) (Neur.: Chrysopidae): a green lacewing new to Britain. *Ent. Rec.* **113**: 131-135). A total of 39 specimens had been collected during 1999 in water-traps releasing aphid sex-pheromone compounds, and trapping in 2000 and 2001 produced further specimens, although it was not recorded from Malaise traps in the area then (or in earlier studies).

This year two specimens have been recorded from Farnborough, Hampshire. On 12 January 2003, JAM found a hibernating female inside a hollow metal pole (part of a squirrel-proof peanut holder), the specimen was clearly smaller than the usual *Chrysoperla* species and a bluish-green colour, whereas hibernating green lacewings usually assume a pinkish or buff tinge. Steve Brooks identified the specimen as *Peyerimhoffina gracilis*.

Although no specimens of this species were seen during the summer, a male of the same distinctive appearance came to a lighted window on the evening of 20 September 2003, and the identification was confirmed by Steve Brooks. One, or more likely two, examples were also taken in a moth trap run by GAC at South Croydon, Surrey. The night of the 4 August 2003 was remarkable for the number of green lacewings attracted to a mercury-vapour trap. This first became apparent during the night when an examination of the trap revealed several dozen lacewings sitting on the transparent cone. When going through the trap the following morning one of the lacewings on the funnel was immediately and obviously different from the others, but was carelessly lost. Fortunately, a second example was found inside the trap and proved to be *P. gracilis*. Like the Farnborough specimen it was slightly smaller than most other chrysopids and, with its darker than usual body and faintly patterned wings resembled a chrysopid that had been scorched by the bulb. In addition to the *P. gracilis*, approximately 200 specimens of other chrysopids were present. The following night this had increased to nearer 500 examples, comprising mainly *Chrysoperla carnea* agg, with smaller numbers of *Nineta vittata*, *N. flava*, *Dichochrysa ventralis*, *D. prasina*, *D. flavifrons*, and *Cuuctochrysa albolineata*, but with no further examples of *P. gracilis*.

The species is clearly resident, or at least temporarily resident at Silwood Park, and the Farnborough records also suggest residency. The sudden appearance of large numbers of chrysopid in South Croydon might suggest a mass immigration, although the phenomenon was not observed by fellow lepidopterists running traps in other parts of Surrey. No further specimens were observed either before or after, despite regular trapping, nor were any reported by moth trappers who had been advised to keep an eye out for it. The photograph in Donato *et al.* (*op. cit.*) should assist identification. The green stigma of the forewing and milky-white membrane towards the wing base immediately distinguish it from other British chrysopids, as does the

darkish-green abdomen with a pale lateral stripe. Further specimens are likely to be discovered by lepidopterists who have the foresight to realise that there are insects other than moths.

*Peyerimhoffina gracilis* is apparently typically associated with pine forests with fir *Abies* spp., spruce *Picea abies*, Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris* and also holly *Ilex aquifolium*; at Silwood, specimens were collected in sheltered but open areas close to mature deciduous woodland of mainly oak *Quercus robur*, but including hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, field maple *Acer campestre* and spindle *Euonymus europaeus* as well as Scots pine and *Cupressocyparis leylandii*. The Farnborough site comprises largish gardens and many trees: western red cedar *Thuja plicata*, Lawson's cypress *Chamaecyperis lawsoniana* and holly, with laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, walnut *Juglans regia* and yew *Taxus baccata* with oak *Quercus* spp. in adjacent gardens. There are also Japanese maples *Acer palmatum* imported from Italy - a possible importation area for *P. gracilis*. The South Croydon site is similarly suburban, consisting of fairly large gardens containing more traditional conifers such as Scots pine and Lawson's cypress as well as oaks, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*. Within a few hundred metres of the garden is a row of limes *Tilia cordata* × *platyphyllos* and a mature wood with a range of deciduous and coniferous trees. A suburban evergreen and deciduous tree mixture is clearly acceptable to *P. gracilis*, and perhaps this pretty and distinctively coloured little lacewing is on the way to becoming widely established in the south-east.— JUDITH A. MARSHALL, Department of Entomology, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD and GRAHAM A. COLLINS, 15 Hurst Way, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 7AP.

### ***Rivula sericealis* (Scop.) (Lep.: Noctuidae): Apparent substantial third generation in north-west Kent**

It seems that until quite recently it was not recognised that *Rivula sericealis* was bivoltine in parts of southern England, textbooks echoing Barrett, 1900 (*The Lepidoptera of the British Islands*), "from the end of June till August". My garden m.v. light records since 1969 at Dartford firmly indicate that the moth here is bivoltine, the two broods of moth being readily recognized by a substantial gap of three to four weeks every year except 1988 and 1989, years of abundance of *sericealis* here with more than one hundred specimens being noted at the trap in each year. However, in 1988, there was a gap of five days from 31 July to 4 August, with records from 14 June to 10 September, to be followed by two probable third generation specimens on 26 September and 4 October. In 1989, records were from 24 May until 24 August, with the largest break occurring for the four days from 30 July until 2 August.

During 2003, the weather in north-west Kent from the second half of May until about 20 September was generally warm and sunny by day and warm by night. *Rivula sericealis* first appeared at my garden light on 30 May continuing until 27 June. The light was operated virtually every night from before mid-May until late